

Work of the Colored law and order league, Baltimore, Md.

Work of the Colored Law and Order League:: Baltimore, Md.

by James H. N. Waring

Committee of Twelve FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE INTERESTS OF THE NEGRO RACE Cheyney, Pa.

Officers of the Colored Law and Order League Baltimore, Md.

President—Rev. John A. Holmes

Vice-President—John W. Rich

Secretary—Heber E. Wharton

Treasurer—Dr. Thomas S. Hawkins

Executive Committee

Rev. John A. Holmes

Harry T. Pratt

Dr. Whitfield Winsey

Heber E. Wharton

Josiah A. Diggs

Library of Congress

Mason A. Hawkins

Rev. John T. Jenifer

W. C. McCard

W. Ashbie Hawkins

Dr. J. H. N. Waring

PRESS OF E. A. WRIGHT BANK NOTE CO PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Work of the Colored Law and Order League:: Baltimore, Md.

by James H. N. Waring

COMMITTEE OF TWELVE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE INTERESTS OF THE
NEGRO RACE CHEYNEY, PA.

1908?

A map of the lower Druid Hill Avenue District. In this district there were forty-two saloons, fifteen churches, twelve schools, one home for old people, one home for friendless children, the colored Y. M. C. A. and the colored Y. W. C. A.

BS 43 3

Work of the Colored Law and Order League of Baltimore

G. B. M. 1943-8-9

THE Atlanta riot had sent a thrill of horror throughout the country, and colored people generally, whenever they met, were eagerly and anxiously discussing it, not only because of the desolation it left behind it, and the misery and suffering it had entailed to the families of the victims, but because as they discussed it they saw in their own neighborhoods more or less of the causes which led to that unfortunate affair.

With the colored people here in Baltimore it was for a long time a common topic of conversation. True, Baltimore had no incendiary press to inflame the passions of the poor whites of the city, nor had she a class of hysterical women to take fright at the sudden appearance of a black face, nor was there here that loose attitude toward law and order which permits the disorderly elements of the population to disregard and defy the authorities in their enforcement of the laws of the city and State. But there were sections of the city, where the colored people in large numbers reside, infested with saloons kept principally by white men of the lowest type; there were dens of vice in too large numbers scattered throughout the city—all of which were exercising a demoralizing effect upon the colored youth and furnishing schools of crime for colored children. These places appeared to have a quasi-police protection, and as it appeared later, in the testimony before the Liquor License Board, at least one policeman regarded the saloons about which there had been complaint from the best citizens of the town, white and black, as “less troublesome than the colored churches in the neighborhood.”

There were saloons of the lowest type in the most densely populated colored residence neighborhoods, and some of the public schools were within 300 feet of from two to eight of them. It was such conditions as these that laid the foundation for the trouble in Atlanta, and surely the existence of similar conditions in Baltimore justified the apprehensions felt by many of Baltimore's best colored citizens.

4

Finally, after some casual conferences and informal discussions at promiscuous meetings and gatherings, Rev. John Hurst, one of the most useful of Baltimore's colored men, took the initiative and called together at his house a number of representative colored men to discuss the situation more formally. At this meeting there were present: W. Ashbie Hawkins, one of the leading lawyers of the city; Dr. Howard E. Young, one of the leading druggists; Dr. Whitfield Winsey, a physician who has practised among the colored people for about thirty years; Dr. Thomas S. Hawkins, one of the younger physicians, and a man

Library of Congress

who has always been prominent in every movement looking toward the betterment of the condition of the colored people; Heber

THE DISTRICT SURROUNDING PUBLIC SCHOOL No. 105 This district is infested with dives and disorderly houses. The small dots indicate the disorderly houses; the large dots liquor saloons; the crosses around them are liquor saloons which have disorderly houses connected with them; the small triangles are houses that are suspected. In this district some of the women who keep these houses have their names printed over the doors.

E. Wharton, a vice-principal of one of the public schools; Harry T. Pratt, a grade supervisor in the public schools; Rev. J. Albert Johnson, who has recently been made a bishop in the A. M. E. Church; Rev. E. F. Eggleston, pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church; and Dr. J. H. N. Waring, 5 principal of the Colored High and Training School. This group of men, after an informal discussion of the situation, decided to organize into a committee of ten, and elected Rev. Mr. Hurst as chairman of this committee, a position in which he served through the whole campaign with tact and firmness and wisdom. Later Dr. Hurst, who moved to Washington to live, was succeeded by Rev. John A. Holmes, who took up the fight with the same earnestness, intelligence and zeal which have characterized his entire life in this community.

It was from this little band of men, all of whom were colored, that the Law and Order League grew. The larger body was likewise made up entirely of colored men, all of them deeply interested in the general development of the

Public School No. 105 surrounded by houses of prostitution and saloons.

whole colored population and fully determined, so far as lay in their power, to make the best possible contribution to good citizenship in Baltimore. The membership of the League was composed not only of the best colored men of the city, but they were the men who are always foremost in any movement for civic betterment, and men who are occupying the most prominent and influential positions in the city.

Library of Congress

At this meeting in October, 1906, it was decided to investigate the conditions in colored neighborhoods, and learn more in detail of the environments of their homes and schools and churches, to study the sanitary conditions of colored neighborhoods and to collect all the reliable data possible to be used in the effort to improve conditions among the colored people. It was thought best to limit the size of this committee to the ten men who met at Dr. Hurst's house. They divided themselves up into sub-committees to study and report on the sanitary conditions in colored neighborhoods, to investigate the school conditions with special reference to their surroundings, and to secure such printed matter and collect such reliable statistics as they might need in their future work.

At the subsequent meetings reports from these committees brought out many interesting and startling facts. In Baltimore, as in most other cities, the colored people are grouped together in certain neighborhoods whose white

MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF SALOONS A poor white neighborhood in Baltimore, in a section composed of four blocks, with 36 saloons.

population is very small and composed of the degraded rumrunner or the small shopkeeper, who has no social antipathy toward his black neighbors so long as business is good.

It was reported that there were at least three neighborhoods in the city in which the conditions with reference to schools for colored children and housing of colored families were deplorable in the extreme.

There was the Caroline and Bank Streets district, in which a colored school was surrounded by a network of 7 saloons and houses of prostitution. It was found that within a block of the school there were nine saloons and no less than forty-seven houses of ill-repute. It was learned that it was most difficult to keep girls in this school after they became thirteen or fourteen years of age. So powerful were the influences of this neighborhood upon them that at thirteen some of them passed from the school to the houses of prostitution and to lives of shame. In a tour of inspection of this neighborhood

Library of Congress

young girls were pointed out one after another, who, the previous year, had been pupils of the school. One mother, who had recently moved to Baltimore from the country, told how she had rescued her twelve-year-old daughter from one of those dens, and how a policeman, to whom in her agony and distress she had appealed, threatened to arrest her for disorderly conduct!

Public School No. 116, surrounded by eleven saloons, 8 of which are within 300 feet of the school premises.

The Rogers Avenue district, in which another colored school was located, while not quite so bad so far as the number of saloons and questionable houses was concerned, was yet a neighborhood infested with both kinds of places, and the block just below the school, on the street through which nearly half of the children must pass on their way to and from school, was lined on both sides with houses of 8 prostitution, over whose doors, in some cases, the women who kept them had their names printed. Such a condition as this existed nowhere else in the city, and made this particular street a demoralizing influence which was different from any other and in many ways more powerful for harm than any other which was found.

The Druid Hill Avenue district is the largest and most populous colored neighborhood in Baltimore, if not in the world. It probably contains more homes owned and occupied by colored people than any similar residential neighborhood

DRUID HILL AVENUE DISTRICT Deaths due to tuberculosis in ten years, 1891–1900, inclusive, in all 11,542. The tuberculosis map of Baltimore City. The lower Druid Hill Avenue district is outlined on the map. This is the tuberculosis center of Maryland and the City of Baltimore.

anywhere. It extends from Eutaw Street to North Avenue, and with the adjacent streets covers an area a mile and a half long by from one-sixteenth to one-half a mile wide. The

Library of Congress

upper part of this district is as fine a colored neighborhood as one would wish to see, and is comparatively free from nuisances of any kind.

In the lower Druid Hill Avenue district, which was the largest district studied, it was found that in a section seven blocks long and two blocks wide there were located forty-two saloons, fifteen churches, twelve schools, one home for old people, one home for friendless children, the Colored Young Men's Christian Association and the Colored Young Women's Christian Association. This section was honeycombed with gambling dens, known not only to the initiated, but carrying on unblushingly a business which was known to the citizens if not to the police. There were numerous dance houses, clubs and billiard halls which were in actual practice only assignation places for girls and young women, and to which many of them owed their downfall.

The Health Office furnished a map which showed that the lower Druid Hill Avenue district was the "tuberculosis centre" for the city of Baltimore and the State of Maryland. From "A Study on Housing Conditions in Baltimore," an investigation prepared under the direction of the Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor and the Charity Organization Society, the following is quoted, showing the bad conditions of health, sanitation and morals with reference to one alley in this district:

"The Biddle Alley district, of all sections of the city, holds the record for the tuberculosis death rate. In the year 1906 eight deaths from tuberculosis occurred in families known to the agent of the Federated Charities, and according to the statement made a short time ago by a Health Department official, there is not a house on Biddle Alley in which there has not been at least one case of tuberculosis."

"From morning until midnight the beer can circulates with a regularity that is almost monotonous."

Library of Congress

“Another striking characteristic of the occupants of this district is what appears to be in many cases an entirely undeveloped moral sense.”

“Gambling is also prevalent and there is reason to believe that the cocaine habit hastens the decay of many of these degenerates.”

As to the sanitary conditions, the report states further:

“Of the two hundred and fifteen houses in the Biddle Alley district, seventy-one had leaking roofs.”

“Dirty, dark, damp and dilapidated are adjectives that fairly describe nearly two-thirds of the four hundred and 10 thirty-eight basements and cellars included in the investigation.”

“In several cellars in the Biddle Alley district the surface drainage from the adjoining alley or street was found to be oozing through the foundation walls.”

“A basement apartment in the Biddle Alley district had no light or ventilation except that afforded by a window 3½ feet square in area, placed so high in the wall that it was necessary to stand on a chair to take measurements. The walls and ceiling of this dungeon-like apartment were damp and in bad repair. From the physical condition of the occupant it seemed likely he was suffering from tuberculosis in its incipient stage.”

One of the most conspicuous features of the houses lining the small streets and alleys in the lower Druid Hill Avenue district were the stacks of washing, tons of which are gathered weekly from the best homes of the city, to be laundered in this neighborhood reeking with filth, infected with tuberculosis and other infectious diseases, and presenting the most unwholesome conditions from which the family wash could possibly be sent home. And yet hundreds of white families are in this way subjecting the members of their households to these great dangers.

Library of Congress

One interesting fact which developed in connection with the investigation of these conditions was the attempt on the part of the keepers of these places to bulldoze and browbeat the committee out of their work. The writer received a warning from the keeper of one of these dives that unless his activities ceased personal injury would be visited upon him. Another man, who kept a business which was patronized by many of these divekeepers, lost all of that business on account of his connection with the Law and Order League. Another man, who kept a store, was forced to give up active work for the League because he could not afford the loss which threatened him if he continued. Others, who were weaker or who could not stand the financial loss which activity in the work of the League entailed upon them, began to hedge and criticise and finally openly assail the League as a movement which was seriously affecting the business interests of the colored people.

It was found that these saloons were meeting places of the idle, loafing element among the colored people, of the crap shooters, of dissolute women, and many of the saloonkeepers did not hesitate to sell liquors to women and children. One of the discoveries in this lower Druid Hill 11 Avenue district was that in the small streets, which were practically alleys, there were three of these saloons—two in one alley, and one at the intersection of two other alleys.

The saloon which is kept by a white man for colored trade is usually the lowest possible type of saloon. The cheapest grades of liquors are dispensed. Many of them have back entrances and depend upon their Sunday trade for a large part of their revenue. The writer has frequently seen a string of Sunday drinkers filing through the back gates into some of these saloons. Other members of the League had also seen these Sunday violations of the law, and there were many outsiders, particularly women, who were the wives and mothers of men and boys whose earnings went largely to the saloonkeepers instead of to the support of their families, who were ready to testify that for many of the saloons Sunday was the busiest day. On one occasion a colored man interested in assisting the committee

Library of Congress

bought a pint of whisky from one of these saloons, and then telephoned the police that this saloonkeeper was selling liquor on Sunday. A raiding party was immediately sent out from the station house, and when the place was reached everything was as quiet as the most exact observance of Sunday closing law would seem to require. It was evident that in some mysterious way the proprietor had received a tip that the raiding party was coming. And so it happened with nearly every attempt at raiding for Sunday selling. The places would be found either absolutely empty and quiet or those in the places would swear that they were mere visitors. It was rather openly asserted about at least one saloon that there was a secret door from it into the adjoining house. At any rate, in this district detection and conviction seemed well nigh impossible.

The alley saloon, being off the thoroughfare, has advantages for conducting this sort of an illicit business with far greater safety and with more profit than the saloon which is out on the front street, and hence alley saloon franchises, so far from being undesirable, are eagerly sought by that type of white men who will run a place for that class of trade.

In one of these saloons it developed that, in addition to the bar, a dance hall was run by the proprietor. Nightly orgies of half-drunken men and women made this neighborhood particularly objectionable to surrounding residents. One high school girl, who was compelled to leave school on account of her condition, was said to have met her ruin in this place. A member of this committee, who for a while lived next door to this saloon, saw the proprietor go out of the saloon one night about midnight, and apparently put something down by the side of the lamp post on the opposite corner. Shortly afterward a policeman came along and picked it up and went on. At the hearing before the Liquor Board the sergeant and night officer on this beat testified in the strongest terms to the good character of this place. One white business man across the street said that his best customers had been run off by the people who patronized this dive.

When the sub-committees made these reports it was decided to undertake the work of cleaning up the lower Druid Hill Avenue neighborhood alone, and to leave the work in

Library of Congress

the other neighborhoods to a future movement. It was felt that by centering all of their efforts upon the one neighborhood there was more hope of success than there would be from undertaking the work in all of them at the same time. It was decided to make a most earnest effort to secure the removal of the saloons from the alleys and the vicinities of the schools and churches in this lower Druid Hill Avenue district. They decided to make charts and secure pictures showing the conditions in this neighborhood and publish them, as far as possible. A sub-committee was appointed to carry these plans into execution.

As the committee progressed in its labor of collecting statistics and came gradually to the point of action, the absolute dependence of the colored people generally upon the mercies of the whites, and the helplessness of the committee acting by itself became more and more apparent. Liquor Boards in the past almost totally ignored the protests of colored churches and colored individuals. Police Boards were but little less inclined to consider their complaints. There had been and still was a general feeling that the colored people were either of themselves so criminal or were so disposed to shield and protect their criminals that they were not taken seriously when protesting against lawlessness and lawbreaking.

The committee early realized that in undertaking to secure these reforms they would have to contend with the powerful saloon interests, which were most firmly entrenched, and would have to work without the co-operation of the police department, whose efforts should always be on the side of law and order. And so they saw that it would be necessary to form a combination with the best white people of the city and if possible bring them into active co-operation in this work. The most important work, then, was to secure the active interest of leading white men. A sub-committee was appointed for this purpose, and they visited the late Dr. Daniel C. Gilman, ex-President of Johns Hopkins University, and one of Baltimore's most distinguished citizens; Mr. Douglas H. Wylie, at that time President of the Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Eugene Levering, President of the Commercial National Bank and one of the most distinguished philanthropists of Baltimore; Bishop Paret, the head of the Episcopal Church in this diocese; Mr. Joseph Packard, at that time President

Library of Congress

of the Board of School Commissioners and one of Baltimore's leading citizens; Mr. Robert H. Smith, a leading lawyer; Mr. John C. Rose, United States District Attorney, who as legal adviser and advocate performed most helpful service for this committee; Mr. Isaac Care, a retired capitalist; Mr. John M. Glenn, who is now Secretary of the Sage Foundation, and who threw himself most heartily into the work; Judge Alfred S. Niles, a member of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City, and Mr. W. Hall Harris, the city postmaster.

The committee was encouraged by the heartiness with which, with one or two exceptions, our request for co-operation was met by all of these men. The committee was not only impressed with the sympathetic interest which their mission raised, but they were struck with the frequency with which certain questions entered into nearly all of these conferences.

A common belief is that colored men will not work. The United States census shows more colored men at work in Maryland than whites.

For instance, there was a query as to why the colored man will not work. They intimated that in some cases the conditions of vice and immorality grew out of the laziness and idleness of the men of this neighborhood as well as out of the environments of the saloons and dives. A study of 14 the statistics prepared by the United States Census Bureau, however, shows that a larger percentage of the colored men of Maryland are at work than of the whites.

The committee was also asked why there is so little home life among the colored people. It is true that the home life is not as desirable among colored people as it ought to be and as most of us would have it; but the influx of the colored population from the alleys and small streets of south and east Baltimore into the more desirable neighborhoods of northwest Baltimore, particularly upper Druid Hill Avenue and the adjacent streets, shows an upward movement along this line, and the fact that there is a most healthy and promising growth of the home spirit. Not only

Library of Congress

The progress in home-getting since emancipation has been rapid in Maryland.

this, but statistics from the United States Census Bureau show that out in the country districts of Maryland the colored people are procuring homes for themselves. While it is true that there is a scarcity of labor, it is also true that there has been a phenomenal increase in the number of farm homes in the State of Maryland. At the present time the colored farmers of the State own fifty-seven per cent of the farm lands they are tilling.

The committee was also asked why there was so much immorality among colored women and girls. The exhibition of the charts showing the conditions surrounding the colored 15 public schools, particularly the Caroline and Bank Streets neighborhood and the Rogers Avenue neighborhood, are complete answers to this question. It was not difficult to see that girls who attended school among such surroundings as these could not in the very nature of the case have high ideas of virtue and morality. It was found that at least five of the colored city schools are surrounded by such conditions. Little girls and boys receive daily object lessons in prostitution, gambling, drunkenness, profanity and thieving.

Another distressing question which the committee was constantly called upon to meet was—Why is the colored jail population so large? The statistics show that about three-fourths of the population in the Baltimore jail and the Maryland Penitentiary are colored men and women—a most disgraceful showing on the part of the colored people. The committee could only admit that the undue proportion of colored criminals in the jail and the penitentiary is a reflection upon the citizenship of the colored people.

The committee made the general plea, though, to the **ISAAC WINDER \$494 To Educate \$2500 to Arrest, Try, Imprison, Recapture and Execute**. Educating a Negro is cheaper than hanging him. white men upon whom they called, that the colored children should have the opportunity as a result of their environments and the general advantages offered them, to grow up into decent citizenship. These gentlemen were shown the conditions which surrounded our schoolhouses, and readily admitted the handicap which such

Library of Congress

surroundings imposed upon little children. We were able to show them that the Colored High School, which the city has maintained for about twenty-five years, has in all of its history furnished but one inmate for the penitentiary or the jail. Those who are graduated from this school not only do not join this jail population, but they are engaged in such occupations in this community as prove their usefulness to the people with whom they are associated and of whom they are a part, and at the same time the wisdom of a liberal policy of education.

The committee was able to show another striking illustration of the value of education in presenting the history of the notorious Ike Winder, who murdered a tollgate keeper 16 in Baltimore count. To arrest, try, imprison, recapture and execute Ike Winder cost the State two thousand dollars more than it cost to educate one of the graduates of the Colored High School. The State not only lost in this expenditure the money involved in the expense connected with the case, but lost the economic value of an educated citizen. The educated, trained graduates of the high school exert a most helpful influence in the community. Assuming that Winder, if he had graduated from the High School, would have been like the other graduates, the State lost also the moral influence of this kind of citizen.

The facts presented to these men as they were visited formed the basis of a plea for co-operation between the best whites and blacks of the city, and the formulation of a plan of action to be mutually worked out by them. Dr. Gilman, who had taken such an enthusiastic interest in the matter, offered the use of his home and invited a conference of gentlemen, which marked an epoch in the approach to the ideal working relation between the best people of both **EDUCATION VS. IGNORANCE. \$15 Average Earnings of an Ignorant Man. \$75 Average Earnings of an Educated Man. The educated man is a more valuable citizen than the ignorant one.** races. There were present at this meeting: Postmaster W. Hall Harris; Dr. J. H. Hollander, a Johns Hopkins professor and one of the noted sociologists of the age; Dr. Bernard C. Steiner, librarian of the Pratt Library; Professor Charles W. Hodell, of the Woman's College; Lawyers A. M. Tyson and P. C. Hennighausen, R. H. Smith, John C. Rose, Joseph Packard, Mr. Douglas M.

Library of Congress

Wylie, Professor James H. Van Sickle, the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Bishop Paret, Judge Heusler, of the Supreme Court; Mr. John M. Glenn, Mr. Eugene Levering, Dr. Ira Remsen, President of Johns Hopkins University; Dean Griffin, of Johns Hopkins University, and Dr. Gilman. Many of these men had been visited by the sub-committee and had had the matter partially explained to them, but at this gathering in Dr. Gilman's house the committee was able to present in detail the charts which had been prepared, many pictures which had been collected, and were able to give a full and detailed description of the conditions which existed in this neighborhood, and to make an appeal for the co-operation 17 of these white men in studying and remedying the bad conditions prevailing in this lower Druid Hill Avenue district.

The discussion of the question, which was full and free, took in every phase of the subject with which these men were more or less familiar, and various remedies were suggested. They finally decided to appoint an advisory committee to act in conjunction with a similar committee of colored men in taking such steps as were necessary to secure the desired relief. The committee was empowered to act for the full body and to call upon them for such assistance, material or otherwise, as might be needed to carry out their plans. This committee consisted of Messrs. Packard, Glenn, Heusler, Rose and Hollander.

The colored committee of ten appointed a committee consisting of Drs. Hurst, Hawkins, Eggleston and Waring

CHART OF GRADUATES C. H. & T. S.

TEACHERS 213

MARRIED (Women) 42

IN BUSINESS 61

GOVERNMENT SERVICE 5

IN COLLEGE 37

NOT FOUND 3

DEAD 18 IN JAIL 0

TOTAL 379

This chart shows the occupations of the graduates of the Colored High and Training School, and in a general way the fact that education insures against a criminal life.

to meet this Advisory Committee of white men and to prepare a plan of action. The conferences were held in the office of District Attorney Rose, who from first to last took a most active part and was always ready to give of his time and his wisdom and his influence to further the cause.

It was decided, as the result of the first conference, that the colored committee should proceed to the organization of a larger and more representative body of colored men, to be known as the Law and Order League, which organization should seek to arouse and cultivate sentiments among the colored people which would not only lead them to seek the betterment of the colored population and the improvement of the opportunities for the rearing of their children, but should also arouse a distinct sentiment against all forms of wickedness, vice, immorality and crime, and especially against the low saloon and dive. The joint committee agreed that petitions should be drawn up and addressed to the Liquor Board and the Police Board, praying for such relief as might be within the power of these respective bodies to grant. It was decided that District Attorney Rose should be the legal adviser of the committee and pass upon these petitions in order that they might be presented in proper form, and he was also requested to appear before the Boards when the petitions were filed. Plans were formed to secure, if possible, through members of the

Library of Congress

committee who were best able to reach the newspapers, their specific indorsement of the petitions when presented to the two Boards.

The definite and immediate result of this joint conference was the organization of the Colored Law and Order League. This organization was formed, after a series of meetings at Grace Presbyterian Church, by colored men—ministers, lawyers, doctors, teachers and business men—all of whom entered enthusiastically upon a program whose one great object was to give Baltimore's colored children a real chance in life. They drew up a constitution which expressed briefly its object: "To improve the moral, economic and home conditions among the colored people, and to do whatever would promote good citizenship." "Any citizen of the city of Baltimore, interested in the object for which this Association is organized, is eligible for membership." With this object broadly, clearly and definitely stated, and with the opportunity for any well-meaning citizen to enlist in this work, about one hundred of the representative colored men of Baltimore joined the Law and Order League. Officers and an Executive Committee were elected and instructed by the League to draw up a petition to the Liquor License Board and to take such steps as were necessary to carry out the object of the League.

Three different lines of work were decided upon by the Executive Committee. First, it was determined to secure, if possible, legislative action, which would include the lower Druid Hill Avenue district within the territory in which the sale of liquor is prohibited. A sub-committee was appointed to draw up a suitable bill for presentation to the Legislature. One of the white men whom the committee visited was particularly desirous of having action of this kind undertaken, and offered his services in urging the passage of the bill. But he was suddenly and unexpectedly called away to New England just about this time, and was away 19 from Baltimore until after the adjournment of the Legislature, which made this action impossible.

"An act to prevent the Sale of Liquor and intoxicating Drinks within an Area or Section of Baltimore City."

Library of Congress

Section I. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland, that it shall not be lawful for any person, house, company, association or corporate body to sell, directly or indirectly, or to give away at his or its place of business, any spirituous, fermented or intoxicating liquors of any origin whatever, or alcoholic bitters, within an area or section of Baltimore City bounded on the East by McCulloh Street, on the South by St. Mary's Street, on the West by Myrtle Avenue and on the North by McMechen Street.

Section II. And be it enacted, that if any person, house, company, association or body corporate shall sell, directly or indirectly, at any place, or give away at his or its place of business, any spirituous or fermented liquors, or alcoholic bitters, or intoxicating drinks of any kind, within the limits of the said area of Baltimore City, he or it shall, on conviction thereof, forfeit and pay on the first conviction a fine of not less than \$100.00 nor more than \$500.00 and costs of prosecution, or instead of such fine be imprisoned in the City Jail for six months, or both, in the discretion of the Court; and on failure to pay any such fine as herein prescribed, he shall be committed to the jail of said city until such fine and costs are paid; second and each subsequent offense a fine of not less than \$200.00 nor more than \$1000.00; one-half of said fine shall go to the informer and the residue to the school fund of Baltimore City.

Section III. And be it enacted, that nothing contained in the two preceding sections shall be construed to prevent the compounding or sale of any such liquors for medicinal purposes by a pharmacist or druggist, and upon a written bona fide prescription of a regular practising physician, whose name shall be signed thereto; and all such prescriptions shall be filled and kept by such pharmacist or druggist, and no prescription shall serve for more than one purchaser; but no physician shall make or sign such prescription unless the person for whom it is made is actually sick and such liquor is absolutely necessary as a medicine; any physician who shall be deemed guilty of violation of such sections, and upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than \$50.00 nor more than \$200.00 for the first offence, and not less than \$200.00 nor more than \$500.00 for each subsequent

Library of Congress

offence; and if the buyer shall obtain a prescription by misrepresentation he shall likewise be deemed guilty of a violation of said sections, and upon conviction thereof shall be subject to the same fine as the physician who shall violate the same; the one-half of said fine to be paid to the informer and the residue to the school fund of Baltimore City; and said violators shall be committed to the City Jail of Baltimore City until such fine and costs are paid; but nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit a sale by a pharmacist or druggist in a case of extreme illness, where delay may be dangerous to the patient.

The second line of action determined upon by the committee was to draw up a petition to the Liquor License Board, which was done by another sub-committee.

20

The third line of action was to take definite steps to publish the work of the League among the best white people of the city.

After the petition had been approved by the Advisory Committee it was presented to the Board of Liquor License Commissioners, and the comments by the newspapers were most gratifying. The Baltimore Sun, in commenting upon the petition, said, among other things:

"The Liquor License Board's action upon the petition of many good citizens for a reduction of the number of licenses for saloons at certain points in northwest Baltimore is awaited with much interest by that portion of the public which is concerned in the good order of that section of the city. It is a section which has not in the past had the best reputation for freedom from acts of violence and disorder on the part of Negro roughs and bad characters, and this is believed to be connected with the fact that in a comparatively small area there are as many as 45 saloons, of which eight are conducted by Negroes. As a considerable portion of the Negro population of the city has its habitat there, it is interesting to note that the most urgent advocates of a reduction of the number of the saloons are the Colored Law and Order League, with many colored ministers, teachers and lawyers. . . . The white element of the north-western section is also concerned to have

Library of Congress

eliminated as far as possible the danger to peace and order created by the objectionable places in its neighborhood. It is clearly up to the Liquor License Board to exercise in the public interest the wide discretion it possesses. When saloons are excessively numerous and a menace to good people licenses may and should be withdrawn till the quota for each neighborhood is within reasonable limits."

A date for the hearing was set and the Executive Committee proceeded then to interest as many white people outside of the Advisory Committee as they could reach. They presented their case to the Association of Presbyterian, Congregational and Reformed Church ministers, to the Ministerial Union, to the Methodist Ministers' Association, to the A. M. E. Ministers' Association and to the Colored Ministerial Union. The Association of Presbyterian, Congregational and Reformed Church Ministers responded with the following resolution and sent their committee, who appeared at the hearing:

Baltimore, March 2, 1908.

The Presbyterian, Congregational and Reformed Association of Baltimore has heard with profound interest the graphic presentation of the fearful conditions now existing in the neighborhood of the colored schools and churches in congested populations in our city, and most heartily unites in the effort to remove these social cancers from our city, and to this end we authorize our Secretary to sign in our behalf the petition to the Liquor License Commissioners for the relief proposed.

H. BRANCH,

H. E. KIRK,

DEWITT M. BENHAM, Committee.

It is interesting to note that the preacher who was most instrumental in bringing about a conference with the Presbyterian, Congregational and Reformed Church ministers was

Library of Congress

an ex-Confederate chaplain, and three or four others of the white men who took active interest in this movement were also ex-Confederates. The following letter was written by this preacher, and showed that not only political lines played no part in this matter, but that in matters of genuine reform and uplift the best Southern people stand ready to lend a helping hand:

Ellicott City, Md., March 2, 1908.

My dear Brother: The Committee appointed by our Ministers' Meeting brought in a report authorizing our Secretary to sign the petition you suggested, but so profound was the impression made by your address that the brethren wish to go further and will do anything to help you in this matter, either by signing, the petition individually or by going before the License Board in person at the proper time, to help you in this matter.

If you will indicate fully how we may best serve the cause, let me hear before our next meeting, the 13th inst.

Sincerely yours,

The hearing took place on the 22nd of April, 1908, and the room set apart by the Board of Liquor License Commissioners for their hearings was crowded as it had seldom been before. The Colored Law and Order League was there in force, and represented by their counsel, Mr. John C. Rose. The Presbyterians were represented by Dr. DeWitt M. Benham, pastor of one of the leading Presbyterian churches in the South; Rev. Dr. James E. Cook and Rev. Dr. Kirk. The Methodist Ministers' Association was represented by a committee whose chairman was the Rev. Dr. James E. Watson. The Colored ministers were represented through Rev. John A. Holmes. Lawyers W. Ashbie Hawkins and C. C. Fitzgerald, representative of the best types of colored lawyers, were there. The President of the School Board, Mr. John E. Semmes, was there to voice the indorsement which the School Board had given to the petition of the Law and Order League.

The Secretary of the Colored Young Men's Christian Association was present to make protest on behalf of that institution. Bishop Paret, who would have been present but for the fact that his official duties called him to another part of the State at that time, sent the following letter, which expressed his views in the matter:

March 28, 1908.

Board of Liquor License Commissioners.

Gentlemen: As living on the very border of the district described in the petition from the "Baltimore Law and Order League," I am well acquainted with the local conditions. I am deeply interested also for the welfare and good order of the people living in it, many of whom are under my own pastoral charge. I have studied the conditions and facts very closely, and I am fully convinced that your petitioners have not at all exaggerated the evil. I have had personal proof of the corruption and corrupting influence of that portion of our city.

And I earnestly ask of you gentlemen to give your assistance to the efforts which earnest people are making to abate the evil. The suppression of many of the drinking places, and the restrictions asked for the others will do much to help.

I have never before offered advice or suggestion in any public affair, but in this case I feel that I must speak both for myself and for the many who agree with me.

(Signed) WILLIAM PARET, Bishop of Maryland.

The Liquor Dealers' Association was represented by an array of some of the leading lawyers in the city. Individual saloonkeepers were represented by their attorneys. Interested white citizens and black citizens vied with each other for standing room at this hearing.

Library of Congress

A most remarkable feature of this fight was an unsolicited petition sent in by the property holders on McCulloh Street. McCulloh Street immediately adjoins Druid Hill Avenue on the north and marks the beginning of the white district. The people in this street bitterly resented the "invasion" of Druid Hill Avenue by the blacks. Their action in coming to the support of the Law and Order League was consequently a great surprise, though none the less welcome. Having noted in the public press the action of the Law and Order League, they sent the following strong endorsement, which was also approved by ex-Mayor Latrobe and United States Attorney General Charles J. Bonaparte:

To the Board of Liquor License Commissioners.

Gentlemen: We have read with peculiar pleasure in the morning papers of to-day the accounts of the vigorous efforts and the petitions to your honorable board to withhold licenses for saloons on Druid Hill and Pennsylvania Avenues and immediate vicinities; and we wish to supplement such timely action with all sincerity.

23

The existence of saloons in proximity to the triangular section bounded by Eutaw and St. Mary Streets and Druid Hill Avenue constitutes the prevailing menace to the success of efforts for fifteen years past to widen and park McCulloh Street from Biddle Street to Eutaw Street, and the improvements consequent thereon in accordance with the recommendations of the Hopkins Park Commission, together with the combined movements of property holders on McCulloh and Monument Streets, whereby they believe millions of dollars in real estate values can be reclaimed and enhanced.

The absence of saloons on Druid Hill Avenue (and contiguously) will result in making that street vastly more desirable (for residences and stores), and as it is now principally occupied by colored persons, the line of such occupation should terminate at that street; and we applaud the efforts of the colored ministers and others of their race in the strenuous protests against saloons in general and in particular in that section in question.

Library of Congress

Very respectfully yours,

ELI M. LAMB, Chairman.

WINFIELD PETERS, Secretary.

THOMAS MacKENZIE, Attorney.

The names of the indorsers of the petition follow:

Thos. J. Morris

Michael Jenkins

John S. Gittings

Arthur Chilton Powell, Rector of Grace P. E. Church

H. Irvine Keyser

Wm. B. Hurst

James W. Denny

Wm. Whitridge, M. D.

Ira Remsen

B. N. Baker

Eugene Levering

Douglas H. Thomas

Library of Congress

Miles White, Jr.

James R. Wheeler

Wm. E. Mosely, M. D.

Saml. Theobald, M. D.

Wilbur P. Morgan, M. D.

Saml. Johnston, M. D.

Richard D. Fisher

Baltimore Monthly Meeting of Friends (Orthodox), Eutaw and Monument Streets, by

JOHN C. THOMAS, President Board of Trustees.

The following were also filed:

I approve of all well-considered and judicious attempts to reduce in number the sources of drunkenness and crime by removing disreputable or superfluous saloons from all localities, and also all saloons from those localities where they depreciate the value of real property and endanger the health and morals of the people.

(Signed) FERDINAND C. LATROBE, Ex-Mayor Baltimore City.

April 27, 1908.

I fully concur in the above expressions of General Latrobe.

(Signed) HENRY WILLIAMS, Ex-Tax Collector Baltimore City.

Library of Congress

I heartily approve of all well-considered and judicious attempts to reduce in number the sources of drunkenness and crime by removing 24 disreputable or superfluous saloons from all localities and all saloons from those localities where they depreciate real property and endanger the health and morals of the population.

(Signed) CHARLES J. BONAPARTE, U. S. Attorney General.

April 25, 1908.

At the hearing, upon advice of counsel, the Law and Order League declined to present any specific charges against any particular saloon in the neighborhood, but asked the Board to regard the law which required that every place licensed should in the judgment of the Board be "necessary for the accommodation of the public." They urged that the people of that community did not require forty-three saloons to meet their needs. The general charge was made that where these saloons were thickest the neighborhood was most disorderly as well as most unsanitary and unhealthy. This statement, however, was met by the police, who, with marked unanimity, swore that all of the saloons were quiet, orderly and fully complied with every law and regulation under which they operated. Some of them swore that the churches, and particularly the church on Orchard Street, gave them far more trouble than the saloons. This charge by the police was met by a rejoinder from the trustees of the Metropolitan M. E. Church, the colored church in question, which was as follows:

METROPOLITAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Orchard St., near Druid Hill Ave., Baltimore, Maryland.

April 13, 1908.

To the Honorable, the Board of Liquor License Commissioners, Baltimore City.

Library of Congress

Gentlemen: On the 6th inst. a protest against saloons in that neighborhood of the city bounded by Druid Hill Avenue, Eutaw Street, New Street, Paca Street, Franklin Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, George Street, Biddle Street, Argyle Avenue, Hoffman Street, Pennsylvania Avenue and Lafayette Avenue, was made by the Law and Order League. On the 8th inst. the dealers against whose saloons the protest was made replied. It was reported in an article in "The Sun" of the 9th inst. that one of the witnesses—a policeman— stated that more trouble was caused by this church than by any of the saloons protested against.

In reply to the same, we respectfully call the attention of your Honorable Body to the following:

- I. This church has repeatedly protested against the large number of saloons in its immediate neighborhood.
 - II. At least two saloons (one at the corner of Biddle Street and Druid Hill Avenue and one at the corner of Druid Hill Avenue and Biddle Alley) have been licensed over the protests of this church and citizens.
 - III. On December 16, 1907, a letter in reference to saloon 823 Druid Hill Avenue, managed by one Oscar E. Goode, being kept open on Sundays, was sent to His Honor Mayor Mahool.
- 25
- IV. This church has never had occasion to call upon the police to quell, or settle, any disturbance.
 - V. It teaches to its members the doctrine that the laws of the State and City must be observed.

Library of Congress

Because of the foregoing, we deny the statement above referred to, declare it to be untrue and unworthy of any consideration in the settlement of the question at issue, and are ready, through our representative, to submit further evidences which your Honorable Body may wish to receive.

Respectfully submitted, THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, Metropolitan M. E. Church.

One of the points brought out in the discussion was that the presence of so many saloons in this neighborhood had depreciated the value of property, in some cases as much as one hundred per cent. The class of saloon patrons are in the main of such low type that they drive the decent people out of the neighborhood and make the main streets through the section objectionable and even dangerous as public highways. Respectable people in large numbers take the side streets rather than walk through lower Pennsylvania or Druid Hill Avenue. The disposition was to charge this depreciation to the presence of colored people, on the ground that colored people always lowered the value of property. This was disproved by the fact that in the upper end of Druid Hill Avenue, into which the better classes of colored people are moving, property was actually selling at higher prices than it had reached when it was a white neighborhood. One of the first colored men to buy in the upper Druid Hill Avenue district bought in a row in which prices have advanced over sixty per cent. Houses in this neighborhood now rent and sell at from twenty to fifty per cent. advance on prices prevailing when the neighborhood was white.

The bad sanitary conditions, the bad moral conditions, the prevalence of disease, particularly tuberculosis, were all pointed out in the argument, as well as the fact that, notwithstanding the neighborhood had fifteen schools and twelve churches, the influence of these institutions was practically nullified by the forty-two saloons. The bad name of the neighborhood, the demoralization of the children, the constant menace to peace and quiet, were also called attention to. One instance of the effect of these places upon the children which was cited was of a little boy who used to come to school day after day, and soon after arriving fall into a deep sleep. Investigation proved the fact that this child was

Library of Congress

given liquor at his home every day by his degraded 26 relatives. Many instances of school girls whose morals have been corrupted were cited. One case in particular, in which a married man was arrested, indicted and sent to the penitentiary for taking a fourteen-year-old school girl into one of the dens of vice in this neighborhood and keeping her there all night. The Charity Organization Society corroborated the argument as to the poverty of this neighborhood by the statement that from this district came relatively the largest number of requests for assistance.

The committees from the various organizations which joined in this general protest against the relicensing of the saloons presented the bad features of the neighborhood so strongly, while the liquor interests and the police painted them in such glowing colors, that the Board was unable to decide on the testimony, but they determined upon the unique plan of personally inspecting the neighborhood. The following report of this inspection is taken from the Baltimore American of the next day:

“The Board of Liquor License Commissioners announced its decision yesterday in the case of the protest made recently by the Law and Order League. . . .

“The decision was reached only after the Board had made a personal inspection of the sections specified in the protest. Owing to the unusual manner in which the protest was presented and the nature of the testimony offered at the hearing of each case, the Board found that it was impossible to arrive at a satisfactory agreement in the matter. By Wednesday at noon the case had assumed such complicated proportions that President Howard, of the Board, suggested that the only way out of it was to go unheralded and see for themselves.

“The result of the trip of inspection was that the decision of the Board was based more on what it saw than on the testimony. In fact, the Board decided that licenses should be refused to what it described as the worst saloons in the specified section. In the big saloon belt, which Mr. Rose wanted overhauled by the Board, were forty-five saloons, some of

Library of Congress

them very near to colored schools and churches. Mr. Rose especially wanted licenses refused to those particular saloons. The Board rejected eleven applicants for renewals, none of which were near schools or churches. . . .”

The American spoke the next morning as follows:

AN UNSANITARY SECTION.

“There is no just reason for Baltimore to have a portion of its confines labeled the tuberculosis section. . . . 27 Scarcely less interesting than the features of its report with regard to the unwarranted number of saloons in the section against which protests have been entered are the observations of the Liquor License Board upon the subject of sanitation.

“The Board made a personal visitation to the locality centring in Druid Hill and Pennsylvania Avenues and found a deplorable state of affairs. Not only was it convinced that there was an excess of saloons, a number of which were in violation of the law with respect to the placing of their entrances, but it saw evidences of gambling and other forms of depravity. It is clearly a case for the exercise by the police of increased diligence.”

The result of the personal inspection made by the Board of Liquor License Commissioners was that, notwithstanding the sworn testimony of the police, they found eleven saloons openly violating the law, and determined that these eleven should not be relicensed. This was such a remarkable situation that the Baltimore News the next day came out with the following stricture upon the police:

WHY WERE THE POLICE SO BLIND IN THESE CASES?

“The Board of Liquor License Commissioners deserve, and will receive, public commendation for their refusal yesterday to grant eleven saloon licenses which the Law and Order League protested against. The saloons are situated on Druid Hill Avenue,

Library of Congress

Pennsylvania Avenue and adjacent streets, and have been the subject of grave complaint. President Howard and his associates could not signalize the close of their term of office better than by setting such an example to the incoming Liquor License Commissioners.

“There is one development in connection with the hearings in these cases which calls for more than passing notice, and that is the testimony of the police as to the character of the saloons. It is a remarkable thing that with so many respectable people in a neighborhood complaining about these saloons, the police—who should be most familiar with conditions—could find nothing wrong about them. Worse than this, in the case of saloons so plainly objectionable that the Liquor License Commissioners, on personal inspection, discover reason enough for refusing licenses, policemen are found blandly swearing that they are decent, orderly places.

“The report of the Liquor License Commissioners is a serious indictment of the credibility of policemen as witnesses in hearings of this character, and suggests the need of a searching investigation to ascertain why the police are ignorant of conditions in the neighborhood in question, which are shown to be shockingly bad.”

The new Police Board, which went into office on May 1, 1908, took up the matter of dealing with these policemen, as the following quotation from the News indicates:

“One of the first actions of the new Police Board, which will be sworn in on Monday next, may be to bring before it several of the most prominent officers of the northwestern district to investigate the charge that they testified falsely before the Liquor License Board concerning conditions surrounding saloons in their territory.

“These men—more than a dozen of them—testified that certain saloons within the district bounded by New Street, Lafayette Avenue, Argyle Avenue and Druid Hill Avenue, were well kept and orderly. In fact, they whitewashed these places completely

Library of Congress

and comprehensively. The protests, however, were so strong that the Liquor License Commissioners went to see the places personally.

“As a result they yesterday declined to renew the license of eleven of the saloons. They found them dirty and unsanitary in some cases; they found card playing going on in others, and white and black people of both sexes mingling and in one instance they found the law violated which prohibits a saloon from having entrance other than on a public highway. . . .

“Nevertheless, the action of the Board in itself constitutes a rather serious criticism of the Department. Some of the officers who testified in favor of the saloons stated that they had been working in that territory for more than twenty years; and yet, apparently, in all that time they had not discovered what it took the Liquor License Commissioners only a few hours to find out.”

SAYS THE NEW BOARD WILL ACT.

Sherlock Swann is to be President of the new Police Board.

“We are not yet sworn in,” he said this morning, when asked what the Board would do in the matter, “but you can put it down that the new Board will take whatever action is proper.”

The rejection of these eleven men was followed almost immediately by a renewal of their applications, either in their own names or in the names of pseudo buyers of their saloons, which made it necessary to fight over again before the new Board the whole question, with the difference that 29 the Law and Order League was now required to meet each individual applicant.

The committee, together with the help received from the various organizations which had come to their assistance, succeeded in convincing the Board of the justice of refusing a license to any of the places which had been rejected by the old Board. The new Board

Library of Congress

also rejected applications for the transfer of licenses from places in other parts of the city to two other places in this neighborhood. These two now made a total of thirteen places closed within the lower Druid Hill Avenue district.

In this first campaign the best citizens, white and black, rallied to the support of the Law and Order League. The net results of the work are most satisfactory. Much, however, remains to be done, and the Law and Order League promises to reorganize its forces for the next campaign. White and colored men in Baltimore now understand each other better. Contemptuous indifference on the one side and suspicion on the other are disappearing.

Registering the first victory against the forces of sin and degradation the Law and Order League intends to continue its efforts until all colored children are thoroughly protected against the evil influences of the saloon and the dive.

List of Publications of the Committee of Twelve

Anyone may obtain a copy of these publications now in print by writing to the Secretary of the Committee of Twelve, Hugh M. Browne, Cheyney, Pa., and enclosing for each publication desired a two-cent paper wrapper, addressed to himself:

*

* Out of Print.

To the Colored Men of Voting Age in Alabama.

Can the South Solve the Negro Problem? *Carl Shurz*

Why Disfranchisement Is Bad *Archibald H. Grimke*

* Voting Instructions To Maryland Voters.

* What A Colored Man Should Do To Vote.

Library of Congress

Garrison Centenary Leaflets.

Slavery and the Race Problem in the South, *Hon. Wm H. Fleming*

The Atlanta Riot *Ray Stannard Baker*

The Negro in America *Andrew Carnegie*

Address Before the North Carolina Society in New York, *William H. Taft*

Work of the Colored Law and Order League of Baltimore, Md., *James H. N. Waring*

Study of the Negro's Progress in Jackson, Miss., *D. W. Woodard*

Negro Self-Help in Education *R. R. Wright, Jr.*

Negro Self-Help in Home Getting *Kelly Miller*

The Convict Lease System (In Preparation) *George W. Forbes*

Negro Self-Help In Hospital Work *George C. Hall, M. D.*

Paragraphs

Some Successful Negro Business Men

Business Co-operation Between White and Negro Men in Helena, Ark.

East Bessemer, Ala.

Negro Banks in Mississippi.

In round humors the circulation of the above articles has reached 200,000.

Library of Congress

Much has been said of the estrangement between the races that has arisen since the war. But it is often overlooked that in recent years there has been growing quietly a closer and more cordial relationship between the better classes of both races. Men like ex-Governor Northen, of Atlanta; Belton Gilreath, of Birmingham; W. A. Blair, of Winston-Salem, and many others throughout the South are doing a great service to the country in bringing about cooperation between the races, and emphasizing the fact that the success of the white race is intimately bound up with the moral and material welfare of the black.

ANDREW CARNEGIE.